

# THE CAMBRIDGE STATISTICS DISCUSSION GROUP

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FOR WHICH APOLOGIES

**Monday 8th October 2001 7:15 for 7:45**

Large Lecture Theatre,  
MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit,  
Chaucer Road, Cambridge

## **What level of statistical detail is advisable in statistical analysis plans?**

**Simon Thompson**

M.R.C. Biostatistics Unit,  
Cambridge

**Abstract:** In applied studies, to what extent should one prescribe the statistical analyses that will be undertaken? Some advocate that everything should be laid down in advance of having sight of the data, some only that guiding principles should be pre-specified, while others advocate a more flexible approach where the analysis strategy can be substantially altered in the light of the data observed. I will discuss this issue from my perspective of being involved in randomised trials, but consider its relevance for other types of studies as well, in the hope that it will generate interesting discussion.

**Speaker:** Simon Thompson was appointed Director of the MRC Biostatistics Unit as from January 2000. Previously he was professor of medical statistics at Imperial College School of Medicine, although his roots can be traced back to the DipStat course at Cambridge. His current research interests are mainly focused on statistical issues relating to clinical trials, including meta-analysis, cluster randomised trials, and health economic evaluation. He continues to be involved in some ongoing clinical trials, through collaborations with the MRC Clinical Trials Unit in London, as a stimulus to these methodological interests.

**Annual General Meeting:** Simon's talk will be preceded by a brief Annual General Meeting.

**Directions** Chaucer Road is off Trumpington Road – if you are heading away from the city centre it is the first right after the junction with Brooklands Avenue. Number 15 is at the end on the left and is a large Victorian House with a more modern extension to its right. Cars may be parked there. The entrance door is opposite the car park in the front of the building. The entrance is in the porch located in the older section on the left as you come in and is accessed by ascending a few steps. The outside door will be locked at 7:45.

### **Provisional Next Meetings:**

29th November – Ted Harding on 'Olfactometry: or The Penrith Pong, EPA 1990 and reasonable doubt'.

**Supper:** Some members eat before a talk at the University Centre meeting in the downstairs bar at 6pm. All welcome !

**Secretary:** Peter Watson, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, 15 Chaucer Road, Cambridge CB2 2EF;  
telephone 01223 355294 Extension 722; E-mail [peter.watson@mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:peter.watson@mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk)

**For security purposes could you please let Peter Watson know if you intend attending the talk.**

**TURN OVER for the Annual General Meeting agenda**

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**Annual General Meeting**

The annual general meeting will be followed immediately by Simon Thompson's talk 'What level of statistical detail is advisable in statistical analysis plans?'.

**Agenda:**

0. Approval of Minutes of previous A.G.M.
1. Treasurer's Report.
2. Secretary's Report.
3. Election of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, plus 3 other members of the Committee.
4. Any Other Business.

**Rules for Election:**

1. FRANCISE: All paid-up members may vote or stand for office.
2. NOMINATIONS: The offices to be filled are Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and three other members of the Committee.

An outgoing Chairman will be a member of the Committee ex officio. At the end of each year the entire Committee will stand down, but may stand again for the same office as they are leaving without nomination. To be elected to a different office a candidate must be nominated by one person from the paid-up membership, not including himself. Nominations do not require a seconder to be valid, but do require the consent of the nominee. One person can be nominated for more than one office, but hold only one. If a person is elected to a higher office (according to the ordering given below) he or she automatically ceases to be a candidate for a lower office. A candidate for the post of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer is automatically a candidate for the Committee if he or she fails to gain election to one of these three posts.

**TURN OVER for the directions to the Large Lecture Theatre and the abstract of Simon's talk**